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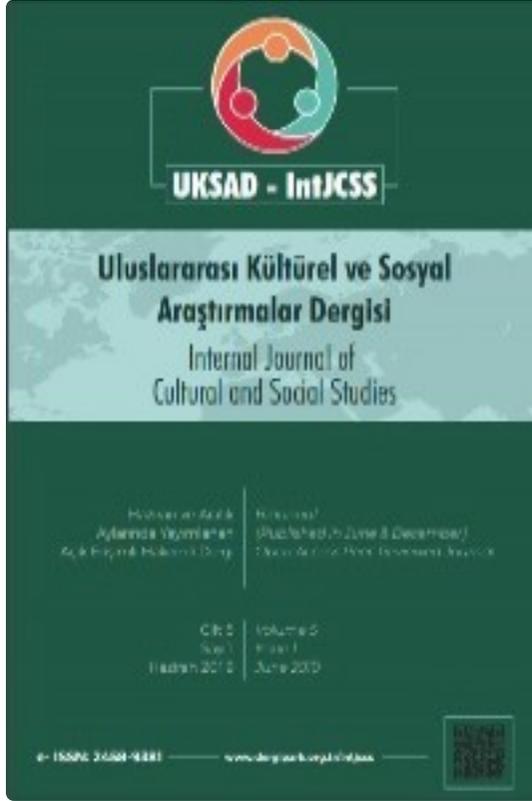
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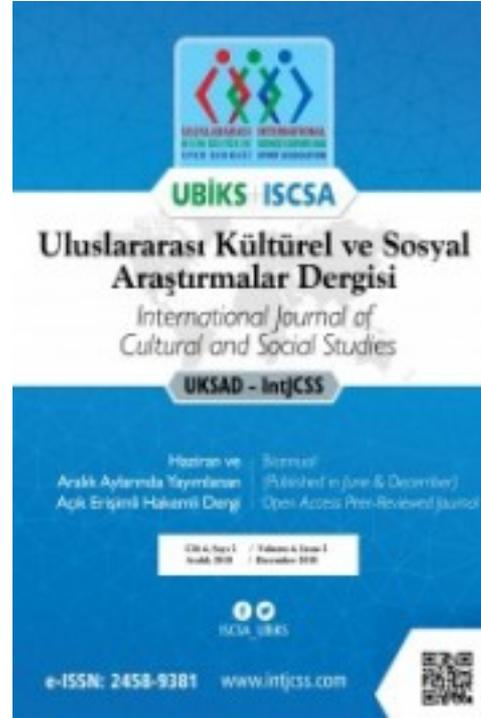
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## **Learning Disability On Ishaan, Dyslexic Character Portrayed In The Movie “*Like Stars On Earth*”**

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### **Abstract**

Lifespan development disorders are psychological disorder, which are characterized by abnormal development. It is a severe development delay that occurs to certain people. Since learning disability is one of major lifespan development disorders under a psycholinguistic umbrella, this study aims to elaborate and analyse learning disability of dyslexia suffered by Ishaan, the main character in “*Like Stars on Earth*” movie as the unit analysis. This study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach by using a discourse analysis method. The film has shown that Ishaan has 31 out of 37 symptoms of dyslexia. Ishaan also experienced emotional and social problems due to wrong perceptions from his surroundings, which make him more depressed, and unable to show his real talent and full potential. It is inferred that dyslexics needs to get the support from parents, teachers and people surrounding to find out their talents to improve their self confidence as early as possible. In addition, specific holistic approach dealing with social and emotional factors conjunction with education aspect must be provided as well.

**Keywords:** Psychological disorder, Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, social aspect, and emotional aspect.



## **1. Introduction**

*Taare Zameen Par* (titled *Like Stars on Earth* internationally) is a movie directed by Aamir Khan that tells about an eight-year-old boy named Ishaan Awasthi as the main cast. At first, he is a cheerful creative little boy who loves painting and playing puzzle. He can make such a creative painting with a beautiful combination of colour and concept. Yet, his difficulty in reading has led him into depression. Teachers label him as "lazy and shameless boy", his classmates mock him and treat him as a class-clown because of his mispronunciation. This movie portrays a child suffering from dyslexia, one of learning disabilities, which affect the brain's ability to receive, process, analyse or store information. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who isn't affected by learning disabilities (Begum, 2008: 26).

Dyslexia is defined as development disorder of reading difficulty and learning disability with difficulties ranging from single word decoding to spelling and writing (Fletcher, 2009; Lyon, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2003). It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge (IDA, 2002:1). Nesari and Kamari (2014) investigated the word reading performance of Persian speaking dyslexic children through the use of a reading test. They found that dyslexic children encountered more problems in reading both transparent and opaque words than did unimpaired children. It also showed that reading the opaque words was harder than reading the transparent words for both groups. The results of this research show that specific characteristics of writing systems affect the word processing ability of individuals in the reading task.

Dyslexics tend to be normal. However, despite their intelligence, they suffer from reading and writing problem, which somehow become intolerable. Dyslexia should not and need not be a barrier to achievement. People with dyslexia are just as talented, intelligent and capable as anyone else, and with the right kind of support they can do just as well across a wide range of professions. Therefore, they actually can study in school setting with help and support from teachers (Bernadette McLean and Barrington Stoke 2009). The name Google itself is reputed to be the result of bad spelling by its founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, themselves notoriously bad spellers, who had intended to register the name Googol (Oldfield & Mitchinson, 2009 as cited in Sander, P & Williamson, S. 2010:63).

As stated by the University of Michigan (2017), between 70 and 80% of people is estimated with literacy concerns have dyslexia, which associates to about 5-10% of the population. Indonesian Dyslexia Association chairwoman Dr Kristiantini Dewi estimated



that 20 percentages of school-aged children were dyslexics. She added that Indonesians were generally not familiar with the disorder. Consequently, children with dyslexia have often been subject to bullying at school, and frustration by teachers and parents. Dr Kristiantini said that she has seen dyslexics who were slow in absorbing lessons at school often mocked by classmates. She said parents and teachers should know symptoms of dyslexia as early as possible, “If the symptoms are detected at an early stage, for example before the third grade, treatment would be easier. After that, a child usually understands emotions and they may already feel inferior” (Dipa, 2012). For that reason, it is vital to identify children with dyslexia as early as possible so parents, family and teachers can help them to cope with it before their frustration ruin their true talents. Since dyslexic children learn differently, they need particular appropriate learning system. In addition, students identified with learning disabilities, including dyslexia, should receive the appropriate assessment and intervention services (Witzel and Mize, 2018).

The movie also clearly describes the symptoms of dyslexia, and Ishaan’s emotional feelings. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to promote the understanding of dyslexia through the character Ishaan as “the early identification of students as well as the corresponding early intervention program for these students will have significant implications for their future academic success” (Texas Education Agency, 2014:13). Pilgrim (2014:103) found ten characteristics of dyslexia when analysing Hank Zipzer, a character in a popular children’s book series including poor self-image, weak writing skill, poor hand writing, poor spelling, weak decoding skill, inefficiency fluency skills, visual issues, reversals, creativity, and auditory learning. If dyslexic child is not diagnosed or identified early as Mr Nikumb, Ishaan’s teacher did to assist him to learn portrayed in the movie, learning disabilities, which can be lifelong conditions that, in some cases, affect person's life: school or work, daily routines, family life, and sometimes even friendships (Kutcher 2015).

## **2. Method**

The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach since it focused on the phenomenon of learning disabilities symptoms and its impacts on Ishaan as a dyslexic character that experienced social and emotional problems. Accordingly, qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena and providing rich verbal descriptions of setting, situations, and participants (Ary, 2002). The primary data source used in this research is the video and the transcript of the movie, which is analysed by using a discourse analysis method. Potter (1987) defines discourse analysis as social study life, which is understood through language analysis in its broadest sense such as images, symbols, interview, non-verbal interaction and documents. So, discourse analysis offers ways of exploring meaning in conversation and in culture, which comprise a broad range of theories, topics and analytic approaches for explaining language in use (Traynor, 2006, Shaw and Bailey, 2009).



The main unit analysis is Ishaan as the main character, and Mr Nikumb, Ishaan's teacher since both of them dominated the dialogues and the scenes of the movie. Other supporting characters including Ishaan's parents, his teachers and his classmates are also a part of the analysis who have interaction with Ishaan. The researchers analysed the related dialogues among all characters in the movie and its scenes based on the formulated questions. In addition, the researchers attempted to comprehend such dialogues to figure out the meaning of the conversation, which is explicitly and implicitly reflected in the movie. Thus, the research relied on the scenes of movie and its transcript, and literature reviews as well.

### 3. Results And Discussion

#### 3.1 The symptoms of dyslexia portrayed in the movie

In order to diagnose dyslexia, it is important to know the symptoms. Based on Davis, R.D. (1994), most of dyslexics will exhibit about 10 out of 37 symptoms that usually occur in dyslexia phenomena. LoGiudice (2008) also stated that most adult dyslexics would exhibit at least 10 of the traits and behaviours. These characteristics are often inconsistent, and may vary depending upon the day or situation. The findings of dyslexic symptoms are presented in the table 1:

Table 1. Dyslexic Symptoms portrayed in the character of Ishaan

NO	DESCRIPTION	YES / NO	DATA
<b>General (GE)</b>			
1	Appears bright, highly intelligent, and articulate but unable to read, write, or spell at grade level.	Y	No sir, he's a bright boy. He just has a little problem with reading and writing. (Datum 29/GE-1) (Time: 01.54.20 – 01.57.40) No Sir, he's a child with above-average intelligence. He has every right to be in a normal school. All he needs is a little help from us. (Datum 29/GE-1, Time: 01.54.20 – 01.57.40)
2	Labelled lazy, dumb, careless, immature, "not trying hard enough," or "behavior problem."	Y	1) "What is this? How many times have we done this? We went over this yesterday. How can you forget so quickly? Enough fooling around. You'll fail again this year. All your friends will move ahead. Will you like that? Concentrate, son! (Datum 7/GE-2, Time: 00.32.43 – 00.33.38) 2) Who wrote this? Who wrote this absent-note? You can't even write properly, bloody, duffer, idiot! Who wrote this note? Tell me, who?" (Datum 11/GE-2, Time: 00.39.35 – 00.41.49) 3) ... "He repeats his mistakes on purpose. Never pays attention in class. (Datum 12/GE-2, Time: 00.41.50 – 00.43.40) 4) "Why can't you? Idiot! What's the problem? Why are you so dumb? Why zeroes in math? and punishment daily? Grammar pathetic, spelling all wrong! Are you tripping? Lazy! Why don't you try? Your handwriting is terrible, homework incomplete. Why is your attention adrift? This child can drive anybody mad. Geography makes you dizzy? Answer me! Lazy!" (Datum 20/GE-2, Time: 01.00.55 – 01.03.03)
3	Isn't "behind enough" or "bad enough" to be helped in the school setting.	Y	<u>Poetry Teacher</u> : First we thought something was wrong, he won't be staying here. But then he showed such improvement. Great! He has



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			such a unique perspective. Well done! Here's his progress report. Now, that's progress. Maths, grammar and what a painter! Your son is very bright!
			<u>Mrs. Awashti:</u> I can't believe all this. Thank you so much.
			<u>English Teacher:</u> No no, don't thank us. Thank Nikumbh. He really turned the boy around. (Datum 32/GE-3, (Time: 02.25.40 – 02.26.30))
4	High in IQ, yet may not test well academically; tests well orally, but not written.	Y	For the time being, let his handwriting, his spelling be ignored. Let him be tested orally. Knowledge is knowledge, oral or written. Meanwhile, I'll work on his reading and writing. Gradually, he'll improve. (Datum 29/GE-4, Time: 01.54.20 – 01.57.40)
5	Feels dumb; has poor self-esteem; hides or covers up weaknesses with ingenious compensatory strategies; easily frustrated and emotional about school reading or testing.	Y	Just think. A child, barely eight or nine, can't read or write, can't do regular stuff, fails to do all the things that kids his age do, effortlessly. What must he be going through? His self-confidence must've been shattered. Hiding his inabilities in disobedience. He must have taken on the world. Must've created a riot here. Why admit "I can't", I'd rather say, "I don't want to". No different from adults. (Datum 25/GE-5, (Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43))
			<u>English Teacher:</u> All the time asking for permission to go to the toilet. I'm thirsty. I want to go to the toilet. Thirsty, toilet... thirsty, toilet. Disturbs the whole class with his silly pranks. You must have seen his test papers? Zeroes in all subjects. (Time: 00.41.50 – 00.43.40)
			No! No way I'm gonna write a fake absent-notes. Go to sleep! I'll tell Mom everything tomorrow. ((Datum 8/GE-5, Time: 00.33.45 – 00.33.38))
6	Talented in art, drama, music, sports, mechanics, story-telling, sales, business, designing, building, or engineering.	Y	<u>The Principal:</u> Here is your Ishaan (showing the back cover of the school yearbook) and here is his painting (showing the front cover of the school yearbook). Just look at it, what a masterpiece! He's a very talented boy and I'm really happy to have him in my school. (Datum 31/GE-6, (Time: 02.25.10 – 02.25.28))
7	Seems to "Zone out" or daydream often; gets lost easily or loses track of time.	Y	He daydreams while he eats, while he takes a shower, while he does his homework (Time: 00:19:05 – 00:19:26). <u>Bus Conductor:</u> "Sitting with your head in the gutter! The bus has been waiting for ten minutes! Can't you hear the bus honking? Everyday we're late because of you." <u>Ishaan:</u> (Didn't say anything, just playing with the fish that he caught from the gutter) (Datum 1/GE-7, (Time: 00.04.28 – 00.04.50))
8	Difficulty sustaining attention; seems "hyper" or "daydreamer."	Y	<u>Teacher:</u> Class, turn to page 38, chapter 4, paragraph 3. We are going to mark adjectives today. <u>Ishaan:</u> (Looking through the window watching the bicycles passing by) <u>Teacher:</u> That goes for you as well, Ishaan Awashti. Page 38, chapter 4, paragraph 3. Can I have your attention, Ishaan? Ishaan? (Time: 00.21.10 – 00.23.37) <u>Ishaan:</u> (Watching birds on their nest) <u>Art Teacher:</u> ... (Caught Ishaan not paying any attention and only looking through the window, then throw a chalk right to Ishaan's head) Hey, New Boy! Eyes here! on the blackboard. Show us where I made the dot! <u>Ishaan:</u> I don't see it.. <u>ArtTeacher:</u> You don't see it? You don't see the dot? Come here! Five raps on your knuckles so that your attention never wanders again. (hit Ishaan's knuckle) (Datum 18/GE-8, (Time: 00.57.55 – 00.59.

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9	Learns best through hands-on experience, demonstrations, experimentation, observation, and visual aids.	Y	<p><u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> Let's step outside this four walls and create something different, anything. Use whatever you can find. Stick, stone, rubbish, anything</p> <p><u>All Students:</u> laughing</p> <p><u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> Come on, let's head towards the pond near the valley! Let's go! (Datum 27/GE-9, (Time: 01.49.20 – 01.49.35))</p> <p><u>Ishaan:</u> (Put the boat he made to the pond)</p> <p><u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> Hey! Look at that! It's moving!</p> <p><u>All Students:</u> Wow! (Clapping their hands), Does it fly? Look at that! (Datum 28/GE-9, Time: 01.51.20 – 01.53.12)</p>
<b><u>Vision, Reading and Spelling (VRS)</u></b>			
10	Complains of dizziness, headaches or stomach aches while reading.	N	-
11	Confused by letters, numbers, words, sequences, or verbal explanations.	Y	<p><u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> ... (Opening his bag pack and taking out Ishaan's books that he brought from the Boarding School) Look here, "b" for "d" and "d" for "b". He confuses similar letters. "S" and "R" inverted.. like several others. Look.. "h" and "t" mirror imaging. "anmle", "animl", "enaml"... three different spellings on the same page. So, it's not as if he remembers any one wrong spelling. And here.. He mixes up similarly spelt words. "T-o-p" becomes "P-o-t". "S-o-l-i-d" becomes "S-o-i-l-e-d". (Datum 25/VRS-11, (Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43))</p> <p><u>Teacher:</u> Class, turn to page 38, chapter 4, paragraph 3. We are going to mark adjectives today.</p> <p><u>Ishaan:</u> (Looking through the window watching the bicycles passing by)</p> <p><u>Teacher:</u> That goes for you as well, Ishaan Awasthi. Page 38, chapter 4, paragraph 3. Can I have your attention, Ishaan? Ishaan?</p> <p><u>Ishaan:</u> (Opening his book, startled and confused)</p> <p><u>Teacher:</u> I said, page 38, chapter 4 paragraph 3. Read the first sentence and point out the adjectives.</p> <p><u>Ishaan:</u> (Looking around to his friends and feeling confused) (Datum 5/VRS-11, (Time: 00.21.10 – 00.23.37))</p>
12	Reading or writing shows repetitions, additions, transpositions, omissions, substitutions, and reversals in letters, numbers and/or words.	Y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) What's this, Ishaan? Every spelling is wrong. Table is "Tabl", then "Tabel" and "de" instead of "the"? (Time: 00.32.43 – 00.33.38)</li><li>2) From picture, the writing mistakes that Ishaan did is omission as he wrote "d-o-s" for "does" and "h-a-v" for "have", both words are missing letter "e"; He did substitution as he wrote "d-e" for "the"; He also did reversal as he wrote inverted numbers "7", "4" and "9" and letters "S" and "R".</li><li>3) From dialogues (Datum 7/VRS-12, Time: 00.32.43 – 00.33.38), the writing mistakes that Ishaan did are transposition as he wrote "t-a-b-e-l" for "table" and "s-o-i-l-e-d" for "solid"; letter reversal as he wrote "b" for "d" vice versa, he inverted "S" and "R", he wrote "h" and "t" mirror imaging. He also did word reversal as he wrote "P-o-t" instead of "T-o-p".</li></ol>
13	Complains of feeling or seeing non-existent movement while reading, writing, or copying.	Y	<p>Teacher: Just read the sentence, Ishaan</p> <p>Ishaan : The letters are dancing.</p> <p>Teacher: They're dancing, are they?</p> <p>Ishaan : (Nodding)</p> <p>Teacher: Then read the dancing letters. Are you trying to be funny? (Datum 5/ VRS-13, Time: 00.14.08 – 00.23.37)</p>
14	Seems to have difficulty with vision, yet eye exams don't reveal a problem.	Y	Ishaan only seems to have difficulty with vision when he reads because he complained of seeing the letters and numbers moving while reading (Time: 00:23:35 – 00:24:00).
15	Extremely keen sighted and observant, or lacks depth perception and peripheral vision.	Y	Ishaan is extremely keen sighted because he can see things clearly from the distance, such as: watching through out his classroom window how water splashed out of the puddle from the passing by bicycle



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			(Time: 00:21:10 – 00:21:30) and the bird feeding its babies in their nest on top of the tree (Time: 00:57:55 – 00:58:20). He is also observant because he notices things quickly, such as: he noticed a sandwich on top of the table which quite far from where he was (Time: 00:09:42 – 00:09:48) and he also noticed little things on the street which he took and collected on his pocket which then he made a boat out of those things (Time: 00:08:45 – 00:09:10). However, Ishaan also lacks depth perception which means he can not determine how fast an object is coming towards him and he also lacks of peripheral or side vision which means he cannot see the movement or object outside his central area of focus. That's why he cannot catch a ball
16	Reads and rereads with little comprehension.	Y	<u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> When you read "a-p-p-l-e", your mind conjures up an apple. Ishaan can't read the word, so he can't understand what it means. In order to read and write, it is essential to relate sounds with symbols, know the meaning of words; Ishaan is unable to fulfil this basic requirement. (Datum 25/VRS-16, (Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43)
17	Spells phonetically and inconsistently.	Y	What's this, Ishaan? Every spelling is wrong. Table is "Tabl", then "Tabel" and "de" instead of "the"? What is this? How many times have we done this? We went over this yesterday. How can you forget so quickly? (Datum 7/VRS-17, Time: 00.32.43 – 00.33.38) ... "anmle", "animl", "enaml" three different spellings on the same page. So, it's not as if he remembers any one wrong spelling. (Datum 25/VRS-17, Time: 01.36.50 – 01.45.15 )
	<b><u>Hearing and Speech (HS)</u></b>		
18	Has extended hearing; hears things not said or apparent to others; easily distracted by sounds.	Y	Ishaan doesn't seem to have extended hearing. He only seems to be easily distracted by sounds. It is shown when he suddenly heard the sound of dogs barking outside his house, he immediately stop working on his puzzle and ran outside to play with those dogs. He even seems to have hearing problem because he pretends that he doesn't hear what his mother and his brother said when they asked about something he refused to answer. (Time: 00:10:18 - 00:11:12)
19	Difficulty putting thoughts into words; speaks in halting phrases; leaves sentences incomplete; stutters under stress; mispronounces long words, or transposes phrases, words, and syllables when speaking.	Y	<u>Rajat:</u> I told you to go! Don't you get it? What are you looking at? Don't you get it? <u>Ishaan:</u> (Keep staring Rajat without saying anything) <u>Rajat:</u> What are you looking at? (Come towards Ishaan) get the ball! Move! <u>Ishaan:</u> (Keep staring angrily) <u>Rajat:</u> What are you looking at? I said get the ball! (Pushing Ishaan). Don't you get it? (Pushing Ishaan) What are you waiting for? Go! (Push Ishaan) ((Datum 3/HS-19, Time: 00.11.20 – 00.12.42) <u>Yohan:</u> (Sitting beside Ishaan and holding Ishaan's hand) <u>Ishaan:</u> (Keep silent and suddenly tremble) <u>Yohan:</u> (Look at Ishaan feeling worried) What is it, Ishaan? <u>Ishaan:</u> (Keep silent and staring to empty space) (Datum 22/HS-19, (Time: 01.04.09 – 01.04.20) <u>Rajan:</u> How come you join in the middle of the term? <u>Ishaan:</u> My Papa, he... (stop talking and just look down) (Datum 17/HS-19, (Time: 00.57.15 – 00.57.54) <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Look up.. in my eyes and answer me! Where the hell were you on Thursday? If not to school, then where?? <u>Ishaan:</u> (Still silent and scared) <u>Mrs. Awashti:</u> Don't push him. Let me ask, where did you go, son? <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Answer, God damn it! <u>Ishaan:</u> B-b-bunk <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> (Look at Mrs. Awashti) what did he say? <u>Ishaan:</u> Bunk <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Bunk? What? You bunked off school? (Datum 11/HS-

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19, (Time: 00.39.35 – 00.41.49)

**Writing and Motor Skills (WMS)**

- 20 Trouble with writing or copying; pencil grip is unusual; handwriting varies or is illegible. Y Math Teacher: Reading and writing are like punishment for him. Sometimes his English handwriting resembles Russian. (Datum 12/WMS-20, (Time: 00.41.50 – 00.43.40)  
Mrs. Awashti: Done? Let's see. (Look at Ishaan's book) What a handwriting. (disappointed) (Datum 7/WMS-20, (Time: 00.32.43 – 00.33.38)
- 21 Clumsy, uncoordinated, poor at ball or team sports; difficulties with fine and/or gross motor skills and tasks; prone to motion-sickness. Y Mr. Nikumbh: Does Ishaan find it difficult to button his shirt? or tie his shoelaces?  
Mrs. Awashti: Yes  
Mr Nikumbh: Yohan, if you throw a ball, can he catch it?  
Yohan: He can never judge a ball. (Datum 25/WMS-21, Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43)
- 22 Can be ambidextrous, and often confuses left/right, over/under. Y Sport Teacher: *Forward march! Left, right, left... left, right, left.*  
Ishaan: *(Trying to follow the march, but he gets confused)*  
Sport Teacher: *Ishaan, what are you doing? You are ruining the marching order. Out!* (Datum 19/WMS-22, (Time: 00.59.57 – 01.00.10)

**Math and Time Management (MTM)**

- 23 Has difficulty telling time, managing time, learning sequenced information or tasks, or being on time. Y Teacher: I said, page 38, chapter 4 paragraph 3. Read the first sentence and point out the adjectives.  
Ishaan: (Looking around to his friends and feeling confused) (Datum 5/MTM-23, Time: 00.21.10 – 00.23.37)
- Bus Conductor: "Sitting with your head in the gutter! The bus has been waiting for ten minutes! Can't you hear the bus honking? Everyday we're late because of you." (Datum 1/GE-7, Time: 00.04.28 – 00.04.50)
- 24 Computing math shows dependence on finger counting and other tricks; knows answers, but can't do it on paper. Y Math Teacher: Children, surprise math's test. The marks of this test will be counted in final exams, so do well. Take one and pass the rest. Here.  
Ishaan: (Look at his test paper and start daydreaming)  
Great Captain Ishaan out for mission impossible. His mission is to enter the "Earth" 3rd planet from the sun into the 9th planet of the solar system, "Pluto". Three into nine. Oh God, the heat of the sun will destroy Captain Ishaan's starship. Hello Jupiter! Bye Jupiter. Hello Saturn! Having fun?  
Now "3" is getting ready to get into "9". Pluto is destroyed! It is no longer a planet! The great Captain Ishaan has got the answer. The answer of "3" into "9" is "3". (Datum 9/MTM-24. (Time: 00.35.45 – 00.38.26)
- 25 Can count, but has difficulty counting objects and dealing with money. N -
- 26 Can't do arithmetic, but fails word problems; cannot grasp algebra or higher math. Y Math Teacher: Look at this maths test.  $3 \times 9 = 3$ . That's all. Not another question answered.  
Datum 12/MTM-26, Time: 00.41.50 – 00.43.40)
- Memory and Cognition (MC)**
- 27 Excellent long-term memory for experiences, locations, and faces. Y Ishaan shows a good memory for location. When he went to the road alone, he can come back to his school without getting lost. He went to



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			the road quite far from the school. It is shown by how he went from several places. Even he had to take the bus to come back to his school (Time: 00:30:01 – 00:30:12). He also shows a good memory for experience. It is shown by how he did the same color combination, yellow and red (Time: 00:31:50 – 00:32:40), as the seller of traditional ice cream did that he observed when he went to the road. (Time: 00:28:10 – 00:28:40 )
28	Poor memory for sequences, facts and information that has not been experienced.	Y	<u>Ishaan:</u> ... <i>I know, I'm trying, really, see... A, B, C, D, L, M, N, O, X, Y, Z.. Really look Mama, I'm trying hard! I can learn more.</i> (Datum 15/MC-28, Time: 00.46.08 – 00.47.27)
29	Thinks primarily with images and feeling, not sounds or words (little internal dialogue).	N	-
<b><u>Behaviour, Health, Development and Personality (BHDP)</u></b>			
30	Extremely disorderly or compulsively orderly.	Y	<u>Ishaan:</u> (Go to the dinner table and grab a strawberry) <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Wash them first. <u>Ishaan:</u> (Open his mouth widely and put the strawberry to his mouth) <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Ishaan.. Ishaan! <u>Ishaan:</u> (Put the strawberry back on the table and go to his father) (Datum 10/BHDP-30, Time: 00.38.27 – 00.39.20)
31	Can be class clown, trouble maker, or too quiet.	Y	<u>English Teacher:</u> Just read the sentence, Ishaan! <u>Ishaan:</u> They are dancing. The letters are dancing. <u>All Students:</u> (Laughing) <u>English Teacher:</u> Silence! They are dancing, are they? Okay, then read the dancing letters. Trying to be funny? Read the sentence loud and proper. <u>Ishaan:</u> (Trying to read) <u>English Teacher:</u> I said, loud and proper, Ishaan. Loud and proper! Loud and proper! <u>Ishaan:</u> blablublublublublubla..... <u>All Students:</u> (Laughing) <u>English Teacher:</u> Stop it, stop it! Enough is enough. Get out! Get out of my class! Out! <u>All Students:</u> (Laughing) <u>English Teacher:</u> (To all students) You want to leave as well? Who is laughing here? Who wants to follow him? I don't want to hear a titter in my class. Look at your books! (Datum 5/BHDP-31, (Time: 00.14.08 – 00.23.37)  <u>English Teacher:</u> ... Show us where I made the dot! Show us the dot! Why are you staring like a frog? <u>All Students:</u> (Laughing) <u>Art Teacher:</u> (To all students) Don't laugh! (Look at Ishaan) show me where I made the dot! Go on! <u>Ishaan:</u> I don't see it. <u>All Students:</u> (Laughing) (Datum 18/BHDP-31, Time: 00.57.55 – 00.59.24)
32	Had unusually early or late developmental stages (talking, crawling, walking, tying shoes).	Y	Ishaan was at least 2 years old in the video, but he didn't say any single word. <u>Dormitory Staff:</u> You aren't dressed for class yet? Look at your tie. Didn't your Mom teach you anything? <u>Ishaan:</u> (Trying to tie his necktie but keep failing) (Datum 16/BHDP-32, (Time: 00.54.03 – 00.54.30)

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			<u>Mr. Nikumbh:</u> Does Ishaan find it difficult to button his shirt? or tie his shoelaces? <u>Mrs. Nawashti:</u> Yes. (Datum 25/BHDP-32, (Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43))
33	Prone to ear infections; sensitive to foods, additives, and chemical products.	N	-
34	Can be an extra deep or light sleeper; bedwetting beyond appropriate age.	N	-
35	Unusually high or low tolerance for pain.	Y	<u>Mr. Awashti:</u> .... If there's ever another complaint about you, I'll... (going to slap Ishaan again, but accidentally hitting Mrs. Awashti instead) sorry... <u>Ishaan:</u> (Giggling) <u>Mr. Awashti:</u> Laughing!.. Shameless! If there's another complaint.. One more complaint and I'll send you away to a boarding school! (Datum 4/BHDP-35, Time: 00.14.08 – 00.15.30)
36	Strong sense of justice; emotionally sensitive; strives for perfection.	N	-
37	Mistakes and symptoms increase dramatically with confusion, time pressure, emotional stress, or poor health.	Y	The symptoms on Ishaan also increase dramatically when he is confused, under-pressure and stressful. It shows on the increasing mistakes and clumsiness during his study and stay at the Boarding School because he had actually refused to be sent to the Boarding School. (Time: 01:00:12 – 01:03:03)

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Table 1 clearly shows that Ishaan Awasthi suffers from dyslexia and experiences almost all kind of symptoms, precisely 31 out of 37 symptoms. As early mentioned by Davis (1994) and LoGiudice (2008) that most of them will demonstrate about 10 out of 37 symptoms that usually occur in dyslexia phenomena. Although Ishaan lacks of reading and writing ability, he shows amazing talent and he is passionate with art, particularly painting. It indicates that dyslexics have talents and may have higher intelligence than normal children aside from their reading ability. Little do they know that some famous people, such as: Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Alva Edison, Walt Disney, Agatha Christie, Tom Cruise, George Washington, John F. Kennedy, John Lennon, Lee Kuan Yeuw, and the list goes on, are successful people who have something in common which is they suffer from dyslexia. Imagine that they don't have the ability to read, they see words as meaningless symbols, which confused them, but the environment and the situation keep forcing them to do so. To make matters worse, parents usually look up to other children and compare their children's ability. Good grades become the standard to measure how well children will be ready to compete in real working life when they reach adolescence. They start labelling their children as "being lazy" and "not trying hard enough" when their children fail to reach certain grades. In fact, giving label to dyslexic children will make them even depressed. This may lead into emotional and social problems for dyslexic children.

Stella as a dyslexic shared her experiences in her research collaborated with Paul Sander, a dyslexic too. At the first time, she also lost her individuality. As stated in her study "What I had felt all these years to be part of my personality, little quirks such as the



unattractive way I hold a pen when I write, the numerous errors in map reading resulting from confusion between left and right, reading words in the wrong order and missing or adding words, were all just signs of dyslexia. I was fortunate enough to have just completed a Master's degree, with a merit and I had been selected for a job with the Division for Teachers and Researchers of Psychology (DTRP) who really appeared to appreciate me. I had also worked on a number of research projects receiving lots of positive feedback on my performance and contributions. This led to a choice, either I was very good at faking my own competence, which in itself is useful, or these achievements reflected my real ability. What I failed to realize, was that the only reason my tutor had been aware of my likely dyslexia was because he was able to see my work progress, from the unstructured mess riddled with spelling errors to the report that I eventually submitted, as by this point in my life, I had developed various techniques and habits to overcome the weaknesses that I was aware of. Clearly, I had a number of marketable strengths and now with my dyslexic status, specialist help and software, I could tackle my weaknesses. (Sander, P & Williamson, S., 2010: 65).

Jodrell, D. (2010) revealed his research that dyslexic students' self-efficacy was influenced by social identity. If children meet failure and frustration, said Samuel T. Orton, they learn that they are inferior to others, and that their effort makes very little difference. Ishaan is also frustrated by his inability to read and write which led him into having poor self-esteem. (Alexander, 2015:9). However by the help of his teacher, he improves his self-esteem, which led to the improvement of his reading and writing ability. As stated by Davis, R.D (1994), having dyslexia won't make every dyslexic a genius, but it is good for the self-esteem of all dyslexics to know their minds work in exactly the same way as the minds of great geniuses. As dyslexics have weaknesses in reading and writing. Therefore, they can actually learn the lesson best through hands-on experience, demonstrations, experimentation, observation and visual aids, which don't involve reading and writing.

Ishaan also can show how creative he is when Mr. Nikumbh asks the student to make something out of anything they can find near the pond. He can make a boat, which can move across the river by itself while the rest of the students can't come up with something like Ishaan does. Davis (1994) said that dyslexics can experience thought as reality. Ishaan also tends to daydream in every chance he gets. He daydreams while he eats, while he takes a shower, while he does his homework (Time: 00:19:05 – 00:19:26). In addition, Davis (1994) also stated that dyslexics are more curious than average. Davis (1994:6) also emphasizes that "Before a dyslexic person can fully realize and appreciate the positive side of dyslexia, the negative side should be addressed. That doesn't mean the positive side will not surface until the problems are solved. The gift is always there, even if it isn't recognized for what it is. In fact, many adult dyslexics use the positive side of dyslexia in their life work without realizing it. They just think they have a *knack* for doing something, without realizing their special talent comes from the same mental functions that prevent them from being able to read, write or spell very well."



Ishaan also has big curiosity, which leads him into wandering around or observing how things work which makes him difficult to sustain his attention. One of Ishaan's intelligence is when Ishaan uses another trick in solving his Math problem. It was showed during the Math's Test. It is shown (Datum 9/MTM-24, Time: 00.35.45 – 00.38.26) that Ishaan relates the numbers that appear on the test paper with the knowledge he has. When he saw " $3 \times 9 = \underline{\quad}$ ", he relates number 9 with the total number of planets in the solar system. He imagines number 3 as Earth and number 9 as Pluto, based on planets position towards the Sun. In term of language/literacy, Ishaan shows a problem in substitutions which he substitutes words to other words and misconception in terms of letter reversals which is defined as writing letters and numbers backwards or the wrong order (Wasburn, et al, 2017). Below table presents the summary of Ishaan's writing mistakes as seen in dialogues and the pictures in the movie.

Table 2. The Summary of Ishaan's Writing Mistakes

No	Description	Mistakes
1.	Repetitions	-
2.	Additions	-
3.	Transpositions	"Tabel" for "Table" "Soiled" for "Solid"
4.	Omissions	"Dos" for "Does" "have" for "have" "Tabl" for "Table"
5.	Substitution	"d" for "the"
6.	Letter and Numbers Reversals	"b" for "d" "d" for "b" "S" and "R" inverted "7", "4", "9" inverted
7.	Word Reversals	"P-o-t" for "T-o-P"

### 3.2. Social and emotional issues

This analysis evaluates the problems, which usually experienced by dyslexic children. The first is Emotional Problems and the second is Social Problems as stated by Orton that Ishaan experiences both of the problems due to his dyslexia.

#### 3.2.1. Emotional Problem

##### (i) Anxiety

According to Orton, anxiety causes human beings to avoid whatever frightens them. Ishaan also experiences anxiety, which makes him avoid anything that scared him. From the dialogue (datum 8, (Time: 00.33.45 – 00.33.38), Ishaan



skipped the Math class to avoid punishment from the teacher because he didn't finish his homework and didn't submit his Test Paper, which should be signed by his parents. He refused doing the homework because he was confused with numbers and he didn't want to give his Test Papers to his parents because he was scared of showing his bad marks. Therefore, his avoidance towards certain things is not because of his ignorance or laziness, but because his anxiety to show his mistakes which caused by his dyslexia.

(ii) Anger

Social scientists have frequently observed that frustration produces anger. Ishaan also experiences frustration that lead into anger because he often gets punishments and mocked by his friends due to his reading and motoric problems. Ishaan tends to turn his anger towards destructive behaviour. He destroys objects when he is angry, for example when he fought with Rajat and he was very angry that he kicked all of the pots in front of Rajat's house (datum 4, (Time: 00.14.08 – 00.15.30). The dialogue shows how Ishaan turns his anger towards object. He also tore his books, broke his pen and pencil, threw away his books to garbage can and hits his pillow repeatedly when he was angry because of frustration at the Boarding School (Time: 01:01:12 – 01:01:50).

(iii) Self Image

Ishaan is actually has a high self-image. He is confident and proud of himself. When his brother complimented his painting, he grinned proudly (Time: 00:31:50 – 00:32:40) and when his friend asked how his math test was, he answered confidently that it was great (datum 9, Time: 00.35.45 – 00.38.26). However, because of his constant mistakes and complaints from teachers, he gradually feels inferior and incompetent. He even stopped painting because he began to doubt his ability to paint (datum 25).

(iv) Depression

The dialogue (datum 23) explains how Ishaan seems so depressed and keeps silent. He even had a hallucination that all the alphabets turned into spiders all over the place and moving towards him (Time: 01:01:50 – 01:02:25). Additionally, the three characteristics of depression are occurring in Ishaan. He tends to have negative thoughts about himself, view the world negatively and foresees a life of continuing failure. The negative thought about himself was expressed through the conversation between him and Rajan. He thought that his parents sent him to the Boarding School to punish him (Datum 24, Time: 00.57.15 – 00.57.54). He also refused to go to the Boarding School because he didn't consider it positively. He thought it would be a continuing failure (datum 15, Time: 00.46.08 – 00.47.27).

(v) Family Problems

Due to Ishaan's dyslexia, it also caused some problems to his family. Besides receiving complaints from school and neighbourhoods, Ishaan's father has to pay the Boarding School fee, which is quite expensive (datum 14, Time: 00.44.33 – 00.46.07). Even Ishaan's Mother has to quit her job to teach and to take care of him (datum 13, Time: 00.43.50 – 00.44.32). His brother, Yohan, always feels sorry for



Ishaan because his father and teachers keep comparing him and Ishaan (datum 25, Time: 01.32.31 – 01.40.43 and datum 12, Time: 00.41.50 – 00.43.40). From dialogues, it can be concluded that due to his dyslexia, Ishaan's parents and brother are also affected. His relation with his family gets harder because his parents besides they have to deal with complaints, they also have to struggle teaching Ishaan. His parents also compare him with his brother all the time, which makes his brother feels sorry for him.

### **3.2.2. Social Problems**

Ishaan also experiences social problem because he seems to be immature due to his inability to do regular things that children the same age as him can do effortlessly, such as: reading and writing. He also cannot play ball due to his motoric skill problem, which made him looks clumsy and tends to be mocked by his friends. He daydreams most of the time and has his own world. He doesn't want to interact with his friends due to his negative self-image of himself because he was being punished and making mistakes most of the time.

(i) **Less Peer Acceptance**

He fights with his friend because he cannot throw the ball properly (datum 3, Time: 00.11.20 – 00.12.42). He was also punished by the teachers most of the time and mocked by his friends when he got punishment (datum 6, Time: 00.24.43 – 00.25.00).

(ii) **Awkward in Social Situations**

Ishaan also acts awkwardly in social situation. He most of the time sits on the bus alone (Time: 00:31:30 – 00:31:48) and prefers to sit in the corner instead of with group of his friend (Time: 02:12:38- 02:13:00). Even during the Art Competition, when the Principal announced that Ishaan is the winner of the competition, Ishaan was hiding and was afraid to show up himself. He even almost fell down from the stair when he walked awkwardly to the stage (datum 30, Time: 02.20.55 – 02.23.00).

(iii) **Personal Distance**

Ishaan doesn't interact with other children. He plays with the fish he catches while the rest of the children on the bus talking to each other (Time: 00:04:03 – 00:04:55), he most of the time eats on the dinner table at the Boarding School alone (Time: 01:29:30 – 01:29:35), he looks through his classroom window watching his friends playing ball outside (Time: 01:02:28 – 01:02:30). He goes to pond several times alone (Time: 01.053.42 – 01.54.05 and 02:07:28 – 02:08:10).

(iv) **Trouble Finding the Right Words**

Ishaan also has trouble in finding the right words. He kept silent when his father asked about the absent-note (Time: 00.39.35 – 00.41.49). He also didn't say anything when his friend asked for his explanation of throwing the ball to wrong direction (Time: 00.11.20 – 00.12.42). Even when he was so depressed and stressed, he didn't say anything to anyone and just kept silent (Time: 01.04.09 –



01.04.20). He also couldn't explain when Rajan asked why he joined in the middle of the term (Time: 00.57.15 – 00.57.54).

Cited by Palty (2010), a survey (Cummings et al., 1992) looking at various emotional difficulties such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and low self-concept revealed increased risk for mental health associated with specific learning difficulties in youths, experienced by Ishaan. Due to his dyslexia, and no one, including all teachers, parents and principal, is able to recognize the symptoms, makes him become more depressed. Alexander-Passe (2007) in the School Situation Survey, investigate both the sources and manifestations of stress amongst dyslexic pupils and non-dyslexic sibling controls. Results suggest significant differences between the groups, with dyslexic pupils experiencing the highest stress levels, specifically in interactions with teachers, worries over academic examinations, and performance testing, causing emotional (fear, shyness and loneliness) and physiological (nausea, tremors or rapid heart beat) manifestations. According to Palty (1998), there is a consensus that dyslexia has a profound effect on the individuals' educational experience and their ability to master literacy skills. However, it is difficult to assess the effects of dyslexia on the pupils without considering its emotional and social effects. It is not only the specific cognitive inefficiencies that make dyslexia a serious problem, but it is also and mainly the adverse reactions and feedback these pupils receive from their social surroundings because of their specific learning difficulties. Social and emotional problems mentioned above are due to his dyslexia. Thus, developing efficient communication between the pupils and the others involved with them such as parents, teachers and peers is an important process towards the effective adjustment of these pupils in their environment (Palty, 1998).

In this circumstance, teacher is required to have capability in identifying dyslexics and develop good communication as Ishaan's teacher does. However, many teachers have misconceptions about dyslexia. Wadlington & Wadlington (2005) and Washburn et al., (2011a, 2011b) reported that there are 54% of all teachers having one or more misconceptions about dyslexia. Even though teachers label Ishaan as lazy and shameless boy, he doesn't have any problem with discipline as the research was found that there was no significant difference in discipline problems and the occurrence of students with symptoms of dyslexia among the Malays, Chinese and Indians (Devaraj, S; Rosian, S; Noah, S.M; Mahyuddin, R., 2009). In addition, instructional models include multisensory teaching, phonic based, sequential, structured, systematic, and cumulative, which is called Orton-Gillingham (OG), need to be adopted in helping such students (Fitriani & Felina, 2018). This approach also has been applied at Pantara primary school in south Jakarta, to accommodate dyslexic students (Bararah, 2010).

Individuals with specific learning difficulties are at risk of failure not only academically but also socially and emotionally. Continuous experiences of academic failure lead to various emotional maladjustments such as anxiety, stress and depression. It was also found that (Palti, 1998) being educationally better off for dyslexic pupils has an



emotional and social cost. This may mean that their coping strategies with the prolonged stressful educational circumstances are ineffective or even generate new problems. Therefore, an intervention programme should consist not only of specific educational provision but also of specific emotional support or retraining of attributions to education. Having realistic expectations provide the pupils with a sense of control. The development of self-control goes hand-in-glove with self-esteem and success. Having realistic information provides a feeling that things can be done to help the situation (Palti, 2010).

Ishaan Awasthi is portrayed at experiencing 31 out of 37 symptoms, which the other 6 symptoms are not clearly described or stated in the movie. According to Davis, R.D. (1992), most dyslexics will exhibit about 10 out of 37 symptoms. Therefore, Ishaan can be categorized as dyslexic defined as a learning disability which is biological and often genetic condition that cause a difference in the way the brain works which affect the motor skills, memory, learning process, especially in reading, spelling, single word decoding and calculating, regardless their intelligence, which usually co-occur with other strengths as compensatory of the weaknesses, such as: art, creative thinking, and so on. In terms of its effects, Ishaan experiences both emotional and social problems due to his dyslexia.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Lifespan development disorders are psychological disorder, which are characterized by abnormal development. It is a severe development delay that occurs to certain people. Since learning disability is one of major lifespan development disorders under a psycholinguistic umbrella, the article focuses on Ishaan, the main character of the movie who suffers from dyslexia as one type of learning disabilities. Normally, children are able to read at the age of 5-6 years old or at the first grade of primary school. However, some children may have reading difficulty, which is known by dyslexia. Because most of dyslexic people have higher creativity and intelligence than normal people, identifying the symptoms and doing the intervention as early as possible is highly required. It is a lifetime challenge for those who suffer from dyslexia. Learning how to minimize the effect and make the most of its positive impacts is essential. If they can overcome and control it, they will be successful people. The social and emotional problems associated with dyslexia should be addressed properly in order that dyslexics are able to cope with their problems. In addition, intervention program encompassing educational provision, and specific social and emotional supports from teachers, parents and people surrounding must be required and provided as to promote dyslexic's learning need, which is different from normal children aiming to show their true potential.

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